

CIACRS  
The Thai Cabinet

BR 75-25

June 75

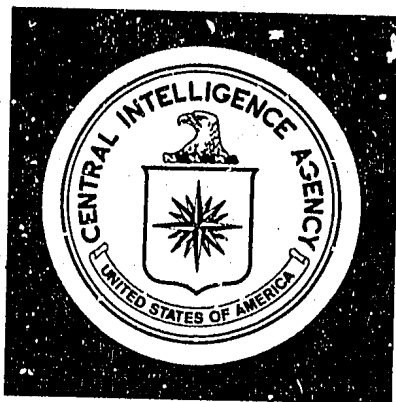
Approved For Release 2000/05/31 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000200010024-4

S/NFD

1 of 1  
BR 75-25

**Secret**

*No Foreign Dissem*



25X6



## *The Thai Cabinet*

**Secret**

BR 75-25

June 1975

**NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION**  
**Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions**

Classified by 004050  
Exempt from General Declassification Schedule  
of E.O. 11652, exemption category:  
§ 5B(1), (2), and (3)  
Automatically declassified on:  
date impossible to determine

SECRET  
No Foreign Dissem

## PREFACE

Thailand is testing a new political process. Its new Constitution, promulgated in October 1974, is the product of a year-long effort by an appointed National Legislative Assembly to create a popularly elected and representative government. On 26 January 1975 Thailand held its first parliamentary elections in 6 years; 42 parties vied for 269 seats in the new National Assembly, the lower House of Parliament. In a major upset, the Democrat Party, led by Seni Pramot, cornered 72 seats. Its closest competitors, the conservative, military-supported Social Justice and Thai Nation Parties, many of whose members have ties to previous military-dominated regimes, received 45 and 28 seats, respectively; and the Social Action Party (SAP), led by Seni's younger brother, Khukrit Pramot, placed fifth with 18 seats.

Political observers correctly predicted that the election would produce a long period of political bargaining and instability before a new government would be formed: Thailand was without a government for over 7 weeks. After considerable back-room negotiating, Seni Pramot was given the first chance to form a government. He announced a minority coalition cabinet composed of members of his Democrat Party and of the Social Agrarian Party, which had placed fourth in the election, and it was sworn in by King Phumiphon Adunyadet on 27 February. On 7 March, however, the Seni government failed to obtain the necessary vote of confidence from Parliament.

On 12 March the Parliament asked Khukrit Pramot to form a government, while Seni and his appointees carried on in a caretaker capacity. Khukrit's Cabinet was sworn in by the King on 17 March and 2 days later won a vote of confidence from Parliament. His government is Thailand's first elected coalition government since the constitutional monarchy was introduced in 1932.

### The Coalition Government Parties

<i>Party</i>	<i>Seats in Parliament</i>
Social Justice	45
Thai Nation	28
Social Action	18
Social Nationalist	16
Peaceful People's	8
People's Justice	6
Thai	4
People's Power	2
Total	127

*This report was prepared by the Central Reference Service, largely with the assistance of the US Embassy in Bangkok, and was coordinated with CIA as appropriate. Comments and questions may be directed*

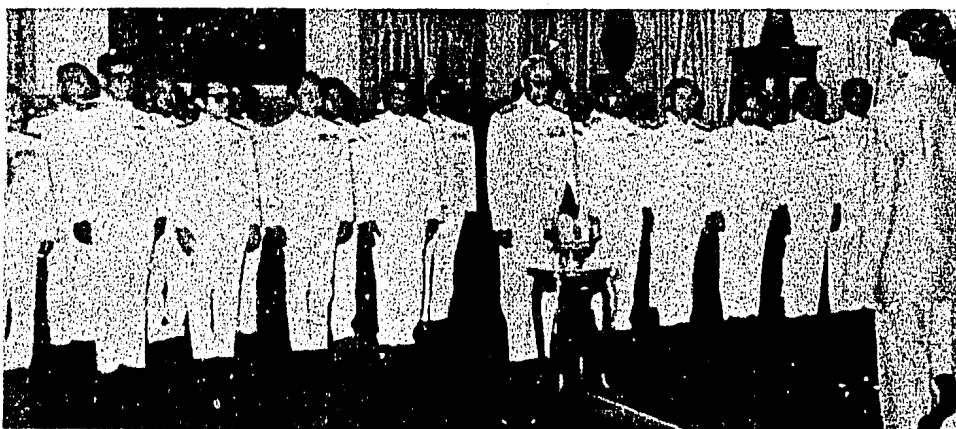
25X1A

25X1A

SECRET  
No Foreign Dissem

A compromise choice for Prime Minister, Khukrit has formed an eight-party coalition government that theoretically controls at least 127 of the 269 seats in Parliament. Its life will probably be short: It is unstable, unruly and almost unmanageable. Moreover, the need to adjust to recent Communist successes in Southeast Asia is causing additional stresses and strains. To ensure enough parliamentary support, Khukrit had to take into his Cabinet parties and men that are in fundamental disagreement with him on policy and philosophical matters. The Cabinet members have thus far shown little interest in working together but have concentrated on continuous quarreling and one-upmanship. The differences between Khukrit and the Cabinet members who do not belong to his SAP continue to worsen. Some officials of other parties are unsatisfied with the allocation of portfolios and are pressuring Khukrit to fill the remaining vacant positions with men of their choosing. The Cabinet is split over the Prime Minister's policy proposals. He has given orders to clear all statements with him in advance, but many Ministers enjoy leaking news to the press. Khukrit has sometimes found it difficult to make his Cabinet conduct serious business, and in an effort to bring it into line he has threatened to dissolve it.

Only three Ministers—Finance, Interior and Justice—are affiliated with the Prime Minister's party. Khukrit gave three portfolios, including the important ones of Foreign Affairs and Defense, to the conservative Thai Nation Party (TNP); six to the Social Justice Party (SJP), the largest progovernment party in Parliament; and one to the Peaceful People's Party (PPP), one of the several that have less than 10 votes. Ten of the 13 Ministers are executive officers of and most are major financial supporters of their parties. At the Deputy Minister level, the TNP and SJP each have three positions; the Social Nationalist Party has two; and the SAP, the PPP, the People's Force Party, the People's Justice Party and the Thai Party have one each.



Prime Minister Khukrit and his Cabinet with the King at Swearing-In Ceremony, 17 March 1975

SECRET  
No Foreign Dissem

Personal relationships are more important than party labels in the Thai political process. The Cabinet is loaded with conservatives with strong ties to earlier military-dominated governments and rival political cliques. Twenty-six Ministers and Deputy Ministers were members of the United Thai People's Party (UTPP)—the now defunct party of former Prime Minister (1963-73) Thanom Kittikhachon, whom student-led mobs ousted as Prime Minister in October 1973—and several held party executive positions. (The UTPP was active from 1969 until 1971 during Thailand's last popularly elected Parliament.) Followers of political and military strong men like former Prime Minister Plaek Phibunsongkhram, former Army Commander in Chief Phin Chunhawan, former Deputy Prime Minister Praphat Charusathian, former Police Directors General Phao Siyanon and Prasoet Ruchirawong, and former Defense Minister Thawi Chunlasap are well represented. The Cabinet includes at least 16 wealthy businessmen and bankers and at least 9 retired military and police officers. (Retired officers continue to use their military ranks after retirement.) Many of its members are old-style, highly experienced parliamentarians; a number of them have a history of blatant corruption. Except perhaps for Prime Minister Khukrit, none is known as an idealist or a leading proponent of democratic principles. No one has a history of anti-American attitudes, but recent Communist successes in neighboring Southeast Asian countries, among other considerations, have forced the Cabinet members to adopt a more nationalistic, less pro-American stance in public. On the whole the Cabinet is less educated, has fewer foreign university graduates, and is a bit younger than the previous three cabinets.



A Thai Cartoonist's View of the Khukrit Cabinet

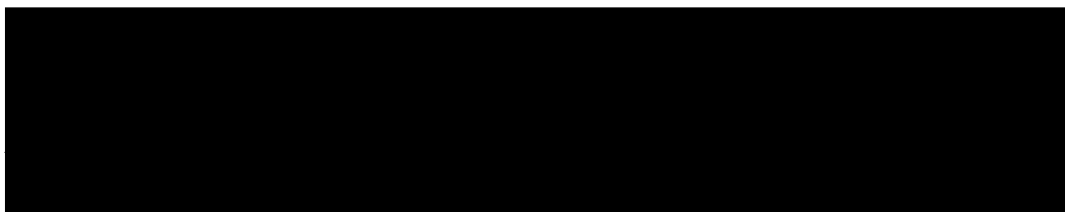
Bangkok Post, March 1975

v

SECRET

SECRET  
*No Foreign Dissem*

25X6



SECRET  
No Foreign Dissem

# MINISTERS OF THE THAI CABINET

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Party</i>
Prime Minister	M. R. KHUKRIT PRAMOT (Kukrit Pramoj)	Social Action Party
Deputy Prime Minister	PRAMAN ADIREKSAN, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) (Pramarn Adireksarn)	Thai Nation Party
Minister Attached to the Office of the Prime Minister	PRIDA PHATTHANATHABUT (Preeda Patanathabutr)	Peaceful People's Party
Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives	THAWIT KLINPRATHUM (Thawich Klinprathoom)	Social Justice Party
Minister of Commerce	THONGYOT CHITTAWIRA (Thongyod Chittavera)	Social Justice Party
Minister of Communications	SIRI SIRIYOTHIN, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) (Siri Siriyodhin)	Thai Nation Party
Minister of Defense	PRAMAN ADIREKSAN, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) (Pramarn Adireksarn)	Thai Nation Party
Minister of Education	NIPBON SASITHON, Dr. (Nibondh Sasidhorn)	Social Justice Party
Minister of Finance	BUNCHU ROTCHANASATHIAN (Boonchu Rojanastien)	Social Action Party
Minister of Foreign Affairs	CHATCHAI CHUNHAWAN, Maj. Gen. (Ret.) (Chatichai Choonhavan)	Thai Nation Party
Minister of Industry	SURIN THEPKANCHANA (Surin Thepkanjana)	Social Justice Party
Minister of Interior	BUNTHENG THONGSAWAT (Boontheng Thongswasdi)	Social Action Party
Minister of Justice	YAI SAWITCHAT (Yai Switachata)	Social Action Party
Minister of Public Health	PRACHUM RATTANAPHIAN (Prachoom Ruttanapian)	Social Justice Party
Minister of the State University Bureau	CHAN ANG SUCHOT, Lt. Gen. (Ret.) (Chan Ansuchote)	Social Justice Party

<sup>a</sup>CIA in conjunction with other US Government agencies uses a standardization system for Romanizing Thai personal names based on the US Board of Geographic Names (BGN) system. The BGN Romanization often differs from the version used by the individual Thai or that seen in the press. The most commonly used alternate Romanization is indicated in parentheses.



SECRET  
No Foreign Dissem

## DEPUTY MINISTERS OF THE THAI CABINET

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name*</i>	<i>Party</i>
Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives	ANAN PHAKPRAPHAI (Anant Pakprapi)	Thai Party
Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives	DAPCHAI AKKHARAT (Dabchai Akkarach)	Thai Nation Party
Deputy Minister of Commerce	CHAISIRI RUANGKANCHANASET	People's Justice Party
Deputy Minister of Communications	BUNYONG WATTANAPHONG, Air Force Sub. Lt. (Ret.) (Boonyong Watanapong)	Social Justice Party
Deputy Minister of Communications	ANAN CHAISAENG (Ananta Chaisang)	Peaceful People's Party
Deputy Minister of Defense	KAMON SITAKALIN, Adm. (Ret.) (Kamol Sitakalin)	Social Action Party
Deputy Minister of Education	SUWAN THANAKANYA (Suwan Tanakanya)	Social Justice Party
Deputy Minister of Education	PRASOET BUNSOM (Prasert Boonsom)	Social Nationalist Party
Deputy Minister of Finance	THINNAKON PHANKRAWI, Wing Cdr. (Ret.) (Thinakorn Bhandhugravi)	Thai Nation Party
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs	Vacant	
Deputy Minister of Industry	Vacant	
Deputy Minister of Interior	BUNLOET LOETPRICHA, Pol. Lt. Col. (Ret.) (Boonlert Lertpricha)	Social Justice Party
Deputy Minister of Interior	PRAKOP PRAYUNPHOKKHARAT, Col. (Ret.) (Prakob P. Poakarach)	Thai Nation Party
Deputy Minister of Justice	BUNKHUM CHANSISURIYAWONG (Boonkoom Chansisuriyavong)	People's Force Party
Deputy Minister of Public Health	UTHAI CHUNHACHAN (Uthai Xunhachandana)	Social Nationalist Party

\*CIA in conjunction with other US Government agencies uses a standardization system for Romanizing Thai personal names based on the US Board of Geographic Names (BGN) system. The BGN Romanization often differs from the version used by the individual Thai or that seen in the press. The most commonly used alternate Romanization is indicated in parentheses.

25X6

Approved For Release 2000/05/31 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000200010024-4

Next 25 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2000/05/31 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000200010024-4